

Message Text

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R 032051Z MAR 76

FM AMEMBASSY MEXICO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3377

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E. O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, US, MX

SUBJECT: CARL ROWAN INTERVIEW WITH PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE
LOPEZ PORTILLO

1. ON MARCH 2 CARL ROWAN ADDRESSED FIFTEEN QUESTIONS TO PRI PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE AND UNDOUBTEDLY NEXT PRESIDENT OF MEXICO JOSE LOPEZ PORTILLO. (ROWAN HAD EARLIER BEEN BRIEFED BY EMBOFFS. HIS QUESTIONS WERE, WE THINK, PERCEPTIVE AND THOSE WE WOULD HAVE LIKED TO ASK.) GIST OF QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS FOLLOWS.

2. ROWAN ASKED ABOUT JLP'S PERSONAL IDEOLOGY. REPLY: JLP'S IDEOLOGY IS THAT OF THE MEXICAN REVOLUTION AND ITS INSTITUTIONS. GE BELIEVES IN POLITICAL AND SOCIAL DEMOCRACY. THE MEXICAN REVOLUTION WAS "NOT THE LAST BOURGEOIS REVOLUTION OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY BUT THE FIRST SOCIAL REVOLUTION OF THIS CENTURY."

3. UNDER JLP WILL THE POLICY OF A MIXED ECONOMY CONTINUE OR WILL THERE BE GREATER STATE INTERVENTION?
REPLY: OUR MIXED ECONOMY RESULTS FROM A COMPLEX SYSTEM OF PRIVATE PROPERTY. THE SYSTEM JLP FAVORS IS ONE OF "CONTINUITY" ACCORDING TO CIRCUMSTANCES. (JLP'S REPLY, WHILE NOT CRYSTAL CLEAR, INDICATED SUPPORT FOR A MIXED
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ECONOMY.)

4. WAS JLP WORRIED ABOUT CAPITAL FLIGHT? REPLY: AN ESSENTIAL RISK OF A FREE SYSTEM IS THE FLIGHT OF CAPITAL; OF COURSE, JLP DOES NOT SEE THIS WITH SYMPATHY.

5. DOES JLP HAVE IN MIND MEASURES TO STRENGTHEN THE CONFIDENCE OF THE PRIVATE SECTOR? REPLY: OF COURSE. BUT CONFIDENCE IS A SUBJECTIVE CONDITION. WHAT THE GOM CAN AND SHOULD DO IS PLAN ITS ACTIVITY RIGOROUSLY AND CARRY OUT GOVERNMENT ACTIONS WITH HONESTY. "THEREFORE, WE ARE ASKING PRIVATE INITIATIVE TO CONCERT WITH US ITS PLANS FOR DEVELOPMENT BECAUSE EXTREMISTS OF PRIVATE INITIATIVE WOULD LIKE TO ESTABLISH A SYSTEM OF EXPLOITATION OF THE PEASANT AND WORKERS..."

6. WHAT ABOUT THE DEPENDENCE OF MEXICO UPON THE UNITED STATES? IS JLP WORRIED ABOUT THIS? REPLY: THIS IS AN HISTORIC TRUTH. "I ASK NORTH AMERICANS WHO ASK ME THESE QUESTIONS TO THINK OF THEIR COUNTRY FOR A MOMENT AS IF IT WERE A DEVELOPING COUNTRY...HOW THEY WOULD LIKE IT TO BE TREATED BY THE POWERFUL COUNTRIES...AMONG NATIONS AS AMONG MEN, I BELIEVE IN THE GOLDEN RULE..." "...MEXICO, IN ITS PRESENT STAGE OF DEVELOPMENT, NEITHER LIKES NOR NEEDS TO BE 'MONODEPENDENT' JUST AS THE U.S. DOES NOT LIKE DEPENDING UPON ARAB OIL. THIS IS NEITHER HEALTHFUL NOR DESIRABLE."

7. DOES JLP THINK UNJUST ECONOMIC PRACTICES OF THE U.S. HAVE ADVERSELY AFFECTED MEXICAN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT? REPLY: YES. " JUST BECAUSE OF DEPENDENCE, PRIVATE COMMERCIAL INTERESTS HAVE PREVAILED OVER INTERNATIONAL EQUILIBRIUM AND HAVE IMPOSED RIGOROUS CONDITIONS UPON US..."

8. WHAT STEPS WOULD JLP LIKE TO SEE THE USG TAKE TO REDUCE MEXICAN DEPENDENCE? REPLY: THE UNITED STATES SHOULD RECOGNIZE THAT THE INTERNATIONAL ORDER SHOULD BE RULED BY THE ECONOMIC RIGHTS AND DUTIES BETWEEN NATIONS. IN BILATERAL RELATIONS THE USG SHOULD RECOGNIZE THE IMPORTANT POSITION OF MEXICO AS A U.S. CLIENT LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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(CUSTOMER).

9. DOES JLP THINK THE UNITED STATES TAKES MEXICO FOR GRANTED? REPLY: THAT IS THE CASE AND MEXICO IS NOT GIVEN THE IMPORTANCE OR THE POSITION IT DESERVES.

10. WILL JLP KEEP MEXICO IN THE VANGUARD DEMANDING A NEW INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC ORDER? REPLY: DEFINITELY

YES. "...WE ARE CONVINCED THAT THE EFFORTS OF THE
NATIONAL SOVEREIGNTIES OF DEVELOPING COUNTRIES ARE
INSUFFICIENT TO DEFEND THEMSELVES."

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11. DO ASSOCIATIVE EFFORTS SUCH AS SELA MEAN A
STRUGGLE AGAINST THE UNITED STATES? REPLY: "IT IS
NATURAL THAT (AMERICANS) SEE IT THIS WAY BECAUSE THEY
HAVE NEVER BEEN ON THIS SIDE OF THE COUNTER." "SELA
IS NOT A SYSTEM OF ATTACK BUT OF DEFENSE BECAUSE AMERI-
CANS OFTEN DO NOT REALIZE WHEN THEY GIVE OFFENSE..."
"WE DO NOT WANT TO TREAT THE U.S. UNJUSTLY; WE WANT THE
U.S. TO TREAT US WITH JUSTICE."

12. WHAT ABOUT THE IDENTIFICATION OF MEXICO WITH THE
THIRD WORLD; WILL JLP CONTINUE THIS? REPLY: "...WE
WANT FOR EVERYONE WHAT WE WANT FOR OURSELVES. THAT IS
THE REASON WE IDENTIFY OURSELVES AND STRUGGLE ALONG WITH
THE THIRD WORLD SO LONG AS THE GREAT POWERS DO NOT WANT
TOLIVE IN A RATIONAL WORLD."

13. ROWAN: AT A RECENT DINNER KISSINGER SAID TO ME, "I
HAVE BEEN OCCUPIED WITH MY AFFAIRS, TRAVELING BETWEEN
PEKING AND MOSCOW, THAT I HAVE HAD NO TIME TO DESIGN A
POLICY FOR LATIN AMERICA." DO YOU BELIEVE THIS IS TRUE?
REPLY:"IT MUST BE TRUE SINCE YOU TELL ME IT IS, BUT IT
IS REVEALING OF THE HAUGHTY PRIDE OF THE POWERFUL..."

"HOW GRAVE IT IS THAT THE DESTINY OF MILLIONS OF HUMAN BEINGS DEPENDS UPON WHETHER AN IMPORTANT GENTLEMAN HAS OR DOES NOT HAVE TIME TO THINK ABOUT THEM, WHETHER HIS LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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DIGESTION IS GOOD OR NOT, OR WHETHER HE HAS FOUGHT WITH HIS WIFE THE NIGHT BEFORE." "I BELEIVE THAT THE UNITED STATES HAS NOT HAD TIME TO THINK SERIOUSLY ABOUT A LATIN AMERICAN POLICY."

14. DOES JLP CONSIDER THE USSR MORE SENSITIVE TO THE NEEDS OF POOR COUNTRIES THAN THE U.S.? REPLY: "EVIDENTLY, TO THE EXTENT THIS FITS ITS (USSR) STRATEGY. THIS SEEM TO BE A PROBLEM BETWEEN TWO POWERFUL COUNTRIES AND IT IS THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THEM WHICH DETERMINES THE POSITION OF EACH. BUT THIS IS NO ADVANTAGE FOR THE POOR COUNTRIES BECAUSE IT IS THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE POWERFUL WHICH CONTINUES TO CONTROL. BECAUSE EACH POWERFUL COUNTRY HAS ITS WEAK COUNTRIES TO WHICH IT IS SENSITIVE."

15. WHAT ABOUT CUBA'S TROOPS IN ANGOLA ON BEHALF OF THE USSR? REPLY: "I RESPECT THE CUBAN REASONS; IT IS A PROBLEM OF SOLIDARITY WHICH ONLY THE CUBANS CAN DETERMINE."

16. TWO CARIBBEAN LEADERS TOLD ROWAN OF THEIR FEARS THAT CUBA MIGHT USE IT ARMIES IN THIS REGION. REPLY: "I MAINTAIN THE INTERNATIONAL PRINCIPLES WHICH MEXICO HAS ALWAYS FOLLOWED: SELF-DETERMINATION, NON-INTERVENTION IN INTERNAL AFFAIRS, PEACEFUL SOLUTION OF CONTROVERSY; BUT I DO NOT JUDGE DECISIONS CONCERNING INTERNATIONAL SOLIDARITY WHICH LEAD GOVERNMENTS TO MEET THEIR COMMITMENTS SUCH AS THOSE WHICH LED THE U.S. TO INTERVENE IN COUNTRIES TO DEFEND FACTIONS OR GROUPINGS. IN THE CASE OF ANGOLA, THERE MAY HAVE BEEN REASONS LIKE THOSE OF THE U.S. IN THE CASE OF VIETNAM."

17. DOES JLP CONDEMN THESE INTERVENTIONS? REPLY: "I REGRET EQUALLY THAT OF VIETNAM AND THAT OF ANGOLA. I DON'T WANT MEXICO EVER TO BE IN THAT POSITION..."

18. COMMENT: IT SEEMS TO US (HOPEFULLY NOT THROUGH WISHFUL THINKING) THAT THE STATEMENTS OF JLP IN THIS INTERVIEW REVEAL CONSIDERABLY GREATER MODERATION THAN HAS PREVAILED DURING THE ECHEVERRIA ADMINISTRATION.
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NOTABLY ABSENT FROM HIS COMMENTS ARE SOME OF THE CODE-WORD TIRADES (E.G. AGAINST "WICKED" TRANSNATIONALS) AND THE FREQUENT IMPLICATIONS IN RECENT MEXICAN RHETORIC THAT THE U.S. NOT ONLY ACTS BADLY BUT DOES SO WITH MALICE. ALTHOUGH JLP MENTIONED ECONOMIC RIGHTS AND DUTIES, THERE IS REFRESHINGLY NO REFERENCE PER SE TO THE CHARTER OF ECONOMIC RIGHTS AND DUTIES OF STATES -- AN ALMOST UNHEARD OF LACUNA IN ANY MAJOR STATEMENT BY A PROMINENT MEXICAN OFFICIAL THESE DAYS. JLP'S REPLIES ON CUBA AND ANGOLA ARE PERHAPS A LITTLE MORE EVEN-HANDED THAN WE WOULD LIKE BUT PROBABLY REPRESENT THE THINKING OF MOST INFORMED MEXICANS.
CALDERHEAD

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